the Nation

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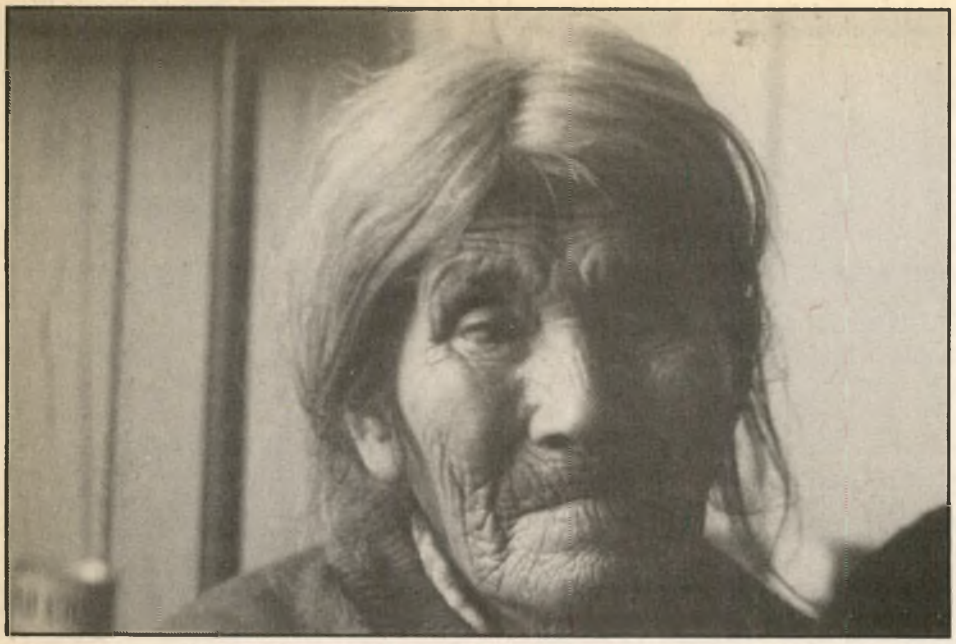

PHOTO BY: PIERRE LEMAY

BY A SONG: TIES THAT BIND

We were just recently blessed with a beautiful baby girl. She didn't start out that way. She started out as morning sickness. Soon, she became a lump on her mother's belly. Growing... We didn't know... We didn't know what she was, or who she was... Suddenly, a KICK. Then nothing...

Waiting... Then, another.

In between kicks, you wait. You wait for that reassurance that your baby is still there. I felt as if this is someone I should know, but didn't. It was as if meeting a long-lost family member for the first time. You don't know them, but you know you should.

Our people have a lullaby for the children, with different variations amongst the communities and families. In our community, ours goes something like this, "Bao—Bao—Bao—Bao," softly using the voice from the throat, varying the tone and pitch with each "Bao." After letting her presence be known, that's when we started communicating with her in earnest telling her we loved her: "Shoo-why-mao." We started singing the song. We use my dad's version: "Bee—Bao—Bee—Bao."

During quiet time in bed and if we knew that she was awake, I would ask Catherine to start rocking gently and sing our song. I would take my turn to sing to her with my mouth against Catherine's belly. The big day was drawing nearer. Should we have stayed with the birth classes? We dropped out after a couple of classes. We figured we'd let nature take her course.

Light contractions and mother-in-law came in... Two days later, still nothing. Then, in the middle of the night, the water broke... Sneaking out, because we didn't want to wake anybody in case it was a false alarm. In the car on the way to the hospital... "So do we have to run the lights???"

We waited in the room. We phoned friends and family in the morning. My mother happened to be passing through that day on a business trip. Thirteen hours later, Catherine was fully dilated. I put the outfit on, into the delivery room, set the stirrups, start pushing, more fluid... More pushing... Breathe.

Then it starts opening. I see a little dark patch of hair. Exhilaration. "I can't believe this!" Then the head is out. She looks around. "One more push," the nurse sternly says. Then, as fast as a heartbeat, they throw the baby on top of the mother. The baby starts crying. Her little fingers wrapped around my index finger. We start crying. She's alright. Everything is where it should be. She's beautiful.

Soon I tell Catherine to start singing the song. "Bee—Bao—Bee—Bao."

I join in. The baby starts to quiet down. There's recognition. The doctor takes her. She starts crying again.

I go out to announce the good news to the family. I come back in. She stops crying in my arms with our song. I take her out to introduce her to the family. She is going to be alright.

Five months later I wonder what the future holds for her. Will her "Creeness" be a distant memory for her? Will there be geese for her to pluck, boughs to collect? Will I say "We used to be from the land; this was ours"? Or will it be the driving force of her being. I do my best to speak Cree to her. I do my best. That's all I can do.

BY ERNEST WEBB

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JANUARY 19, 1994

Message to Cree students

I take great pleasure in writing to you, a Cree who is embarking on post-secondary study in the south. Your desire to be educated outside of your community suggests much about you. It suggests that you seek knowledge, that you want to enhance your life and the lives of your family, and that you are ready to take risks and face challenges and difficulties. As such, you possess many of the qualities the Cree people need to ensure their growth and prosperity in the world of the 21st century.

Right now, you are probably excited about coming south. And, indeed, this will be a time of great adventure and growth. However, a month or two after your move, you will begin to realize that there are personal sacrifices you will have to make.You and your family if they are with you will miss your friends and family, and the lifestyle you led at home. I recall vividly my feelings of homesickness and uncertainty when I came to study at McGill University in Montreal in 1980. I felt the strangeness of a new environment and the loss of my old way of life. All of a sudden, I could not jump into my truck or boat and head out hunting or fishing when I felt like it. The privilege of having immediate contact with my family, friends and relatives was no longer there when I needed company, reassurance or moral support. Back then, Cree students did not have the funding, as they do now, to return home three times a year. I was more fortunate than many other Cree students. I had a car, and I was able to go home once a month and during study breaks and holidays. You will find, as I did, adjusting to the south takes time and effort. For some of you, it will take longer and be harder than for others.

Fortunately, there is now help available to you as you adapt to your new way of life. The Cree School Board Post-Secondary Program can provide you with funding, counselling and practical assistance. In 1980, there was no such help for me and my fellow Cree students. I recall going from office to office at McGill trying to find out what to do. The only practical help we had came from students who were a year ahead of us and who had been through the same problems before us. There were student advisors at the university, but they gave us only the most basic information. They did not have the experience or training to deal with Native students and their special needs. Today, you will face many of the situations that we faced, and you will be equally challenged. But your chances of success will be much better, with the support of the Post-Secondary Program. As the co-ordinator of the program, I take great pride in contributing to that support.

At the same time, I want to emphasize that the opportunity you have to be educated brings responsibilities with it. More and more in our communities, the value of formal education is being recognized. College and university learning are taking their place alongside traditional teaching and wisdom. People back home will look up to you because of your education and they will seek your advice and leadership. You must be prepared to continue making sacrifices long after your education is complete. As an educated Cree, you will have an obligation to serve your community and your people as they face the difficult challenges of preserving their culture and improving their living conditions in a complex and difficult world.

During the coming year, I will come to know many of you. You will find that my staff and I are people who care and who want to work with you on a personal basis. Please drop in to our offices in Montreal and Hull whenever you can. We are always eager to talk to you, to help with problems and to learn more about how you feel as you ease into life in the city.

Enjoy the coming year and make the most of it. Your efforts and achievements in your CEGEP, college or university will be accomplishments in which all Crees will take pride.

by George Blacksmith,
Co-ordinator of Post-Secondary Programs, Cree School Board

the Nation

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First Nations housing in crisis

If you're one of the thousands of Crees on waiting lists for subsidized housing, the news isn't good. At the current rate of housing construction, it will take until the year 2009 before every Eastern James Bay Cree who needs a new home right now gets one. And that's not counting the fact that another 75 families are added to the waiting lists for subsidized housing each year.

"At that rate, we'll never catch up," says Brian Craik, responsible for housing issues at the Grand Council of the Crees.

Craik says the problem may get worse before it gets any better. Funding from Ottawa for on-reserve housing has fallen by a third in the last decade. All eyes are now on the new Liberal government, which is set to announce a new housing policy in the next few months. It's likely there will be new cuts.

"The government wants something new, but no one knows what it is," says Craik. He fears that, in the name of attacking a runaway deficit, the Liberals may carry out a Tory threat to make dramatic new cuts to the First Nations housing budget.

Before getting turfed out of office in October, the Tories were sitting on a plan to drastically reduce the amount of money given to First Nations homebuyers in the form of grants, and replace this with loans to be paid back with interest.

Al Horner, director of Indian programming and funding allocation in the federal Indian Affairs department, wouldn't give any hints about the new housing policy. But even he acknowledged that the government isn't doing nearly enough. "Between the need to properly maintain homes and the fact that there is a fairly healthy backlog, the current rate of government expenditures would not in itself meet the demand," Horner said. "That's a well-known situation that's one of the first issues the chiefs raise when I meet with them."

Horner's department spends $137 million each year for on-reserve housing, an amount that has remained frozen for a decade. During that time, inflation has eaten up a third of the value of the spending.

The federal government doesn't have figures on the total number of First Nations people on waiting lists for subsidized housing across the country. Separate lists are compiled by each First Nation. Craik said 1,200 new houses are needed in the Eastern James Bay Cree communities alone. Last year, only 75 new houses were built for Crees with federal funds. At that rate, the existing housing backlog won't be cleared up for 15 years.

Horner said his department is waiting for the Liberal Throne Speech on January 19 before determining a new housing policy. Horner is waiting to see whether the new government is going to be as deficit-conscious as the Tories were. If the Throne Speech contains a lot of belt-tightening language, Indian Affairs may come back with a recommendation of major cuts to housing subsidies, Horner implied.

Craik expressed frustration with the haphazard way the federal government allocates housing funds. Stable funding would help Crees plan a long-term housing policy to ensure housing goes to those people who need it the most. A housing policy could also include rules barring preferential treatment in the allocation of housing.

Such a policy could also address the wide disparity in how much contractors charge for construction of a house in different communities. The average new house in Chisasibi costs about $160,000 to build. One in Mistissini costs only $100-110,000, whereas one in Waswanipi costs less than $100,000.

BY ALEX ROSLIN

Conflicting Images of our Destiny

by D. Romeo Saganash

The decision to oppose the proposed Great Whale River project was taken almost five years ago by the highest decision-making body of the Cree Nation: the General Assembly. Given that the Cree leadership now seems to wonder whether or not that position still holds, is another general meeting on the issue in order?

The December meeting of the Grand Council of the Cree nation has always been an occasion for council members to pronounce themselves on matters of importance to their people. It is an opportunity to question, re-assess, contemplate, wish, agree or disagree and, yes, even blame. The last meeting of the council was no different, except that for the first time perhaps, discussions were quite direct and clear. No small talk! In such a context, it is easy to imagine one Cree chief pointing with an accusing finger toward Matthew Mukash of Whapmagoostui, and exclaiming: "You know you're the deal-breaker, don't you?"

The question was provocative indeed, but it is nevertheless asked once again.

The fact that certain Crees would prefer negotiating over the proposed Great Whale River project, rather than powwowing against Hydro-Quebec, is certainly no news to anyone. And it doesn't really matter that within the council, opinions vary or are even opposite. We all lived James Bay I, but each of us experienced it with different eyes and lives. So the question posed deserves a comprehensive response, not from our high-minded leadership alone, but from the ultimate holders of the power to decide: the Cree people.

No one could reasonably argue that our lives have not been transformed by the adventure of the century. What is debatable, however, is whether or not the transformation was for the better of worse. Which brings us to the two conflicting visions of our destiny in the present debate. On the one side is the view that the James Bay hydroelectric development is our past - colonialism in all its forms being no longer acceptable. On the other side is the belief that such development remains our future - the

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OUR DESTINY...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

sort of necessary evil we can't do without to advance our cause.

While the James Bay projects have not yet completely destroyed our world, they have destroyed our idea of the world. We now live in contemporary times facing contemporary challenges, which obviously call for contemporary answers. There is no doubt that the responses given to what we faced in the early '70s were visionary, to say the least. We owe respect to the Cree leaders who have so honourably met the fundamental challenge of those days. Their remarkable insight has given us the choice, as Crees, between the traditional way of life or modernity (or a bit of both).

However, like any great idea, it was destined to be challenged one day. The issue is no longer confined to the classic struggle between the Grand Council of the Crees and Hydro-Quebec. Buying social peace will no longer do. It concerns the fate of a land and a people; it concerns our destiny. There is a call for new and bold solutions, and a revolutionary level of courage and imagination equal to the critical times our people face.

The crucial message we can gather from the present situation is that we can't count on just our chiefs. The whole nation must get involved in making our world a better place to live. The present challenge summons Crees at every level to engage in the momentous task ahead. If the adventure we experienced in the early '70s wasn't really ours, the next one must be our own. There is a chance and an opportunity for achievement once again, to lay the foundation of our society for the future.

Those who recall March 1989 have found the highly serious and emotional discussions of that General Assembly extremely positive. We came out of the meeting, after three arduous days of discussion and debate, knowing what we wanted and what not. What's distressing today is that our leaders are starting to think about the unthinkable.

Another assembly on the issue would at least have the merit to inspire, enrich and validate the efforts and beliefs of those political leaders who have read the people well, so that we can harness the energies of all toward our goals. Only then will those "Ivory Tower Crees" join the rest.

Once, we mistook the tyrant for the liberator of our people. Whether we should allow a second chance is up to us to decide. Let us have that essential ingredient of democracy: a debate.

Don't forget our heroes

Letter to the Nation:

Congratulations to *the Nation* for giving the Cree people a medium in which to express their opinions, ask questions and receive answers on matters that concern them.

Might *the Nation* consider adding a section presenting a few of the many personalities or events that are part of our history as First Peoples?

We need to become familiar with certain names, as well as their significance, in order to rediscover ourselves. Names like Pine Ridge, Chief Joseph, Restigouche, Deganawida, Wounded Knee, Louis Riel and even AIM. These are just a few of the names or events that, as natives, we have knowledge of. Just because the history books we are forced to use in school only briefly, if ever, mention these names, it does not give us reason to forget them or become ignorant as to their significance.

By finding out what these names mean, we find out who we are as a people. By finding out who we are as people, we find out what pride is. By finding pride and restoring it, we will not only be able to face the challenges that confront us, but we will triumph over them.

We have our prophets, our heroes, our battles and our victories. Let us not forget them.

Andy Baribeau
Mistissini

Ed. Note: Thank you, we do our best, but we need the help of the nation. We ask you to seek out our "names," read about them or talk to them, and send stories about those people and places to us so we can include them in the Nation.

Congrats from Chiwhatin

Letter to the Nation:

I would just like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your recent venture. *The Nation* fills an important need to communicate the various events and concerns among the Cree communities. This kind of communication is essential to the continued growth and prosperity of the Cree Nation. You should be very proud of a job well done.

Earl Danylyk
Chiwhatin Productions

The Nation welcomes letters to the editor, comment pieces and other submissions from our readers. We strive to reflect all opinions in our pages.

PHOTO BY: PIERRE LEMAY

ENOUGH TO TAX ANY NATIVE'S PATIENCE

Revenue Canada Taxation is a department that not many native people are aware of. In the dark not too distant past, the only real way a native got a chance to know the taxman intimately was through enfranchisement (basically giving up all your native rights so you could vote). Some native women lost their native status when they happened to fall in love with a non-native.

Bill C-31, passed by the federal government in 1985, restored the rights they lost through enfranchisement, thereby removing some from the Canadian tax bracket. The taxman at Revenue Canada must have noticed that a miniscule amount of money was no longer available. So they went looking for a new way to bring natives into the mainstream Canadian pastime of paying your taxes.

As of Jan. 1, native workers employed off-reserve will be faced with new rules from Revenue Canada. For the first time, they will have to pay income taxes even if their employer is reserve-based. Income tax will also be levied on employees hired by off-reserve companies through reserve-based employment agencies, a major blow to many First Nations employers.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada recently released a report entitled, *The Incidence Of Family Poverty On Canadian Indian Reserves*. In this report the facts speak for themselves. "Poverty is very widespread on reserves with about half (47.2%) of Indian families falling below the poverty line," reads the summary. This is more than three times the rate for Canada overall.

Sixty four per cent of First Nations reserves have medium incomes which fall below Statistics Canada Low Income Cut-offs. On nearly two-thirds of the reserves, at least half the people are poor.

When one is faced with these types of statistics, the expected response of government would be to correct the problem. Any child of economics would tell you that more money is needed, not less.

When residents spend money within a community, it has a multiplier effect. The money you spend for a good or service is returned partially to the community at large through other goods and services and wages. But some of the money is spent outside the community and more money is needed from the outside to replace it. For a community to grow, you need a larger amount of money. If at this moment native communities have an inefficient infrastructure to support the citizens living there, is this not a government concern that requires positive not negative actions?

Moreover, do not some activities required of First Nations have to take place off- reserve? For example, the offices of the Grand Council of the Crees have to be located in the south. The Crees maintain an office in Ottawa to lobby, consult and negotiate with the federal government; in Quebec, to lobby the provincial government; and in Montreal, to lobby Hydro-Quebec and deal with other government agencies. The same type of necessity faces companies such as Cree Construction and Air Creebec which also require people and offices down south. There are also reserve-based employment agencies which find jobs for native workers off-reserve, thereby relieving some of the unemployment and poverty back home.

If you want to do something about this or get more information, contact ACT FAIR (Aboriginal Coalition on Taxation For Aboriginal Inherent Rights), a Hamilton-based native lobby group working against government attempts to tax First Nations peoples.

Contact ACT FAIR's David Neegan at 416-522-5074 or David Maracle at 519-756-2205.

BY WILL NICHOLLS

SIRROS APPOINTMENT OMINOUS

Premier Daniel Johnson's decision to hand the natural-resources and native-affairs portfolios to the same minister, Christos Sirros, is an ominous sign, says Kenny Blacksmith, deputy Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees.

"We all know where Sirros is coming from, trying to promote negotiations on Great Whale," Blacksmith said. "He's been very aggressive on Great Whale and on the need for Crees to come to the table."

Sirros, who has been Native Affairs Minister for the past three years, takes on the natural-resources job from Lise Bacon, who bailed out of politics at the same time as Robert Bourassa and many other Liberal heavyweights. Sirros told Canadian Press he won't be in a conflict-of-interest holding down both jobs. "I'm the same person. I haven't changed. I know the [aboriginal] issues and am sensitive to them and I also understand Quebec's economic reality."

But Blacksmith said it will be a "delicate balancing act" for Sirros to provide services to aboriginal people as Native Affairs Minister, while at the same time promoting the interests of Hydro-Quebec.

Blacksmith said Sirros's appointment may be part of an effort by the Liberal government to start aggressively promoting the Great Whale project to Quebecers as a job-creation plan, in an effort to restore the party's faltering popularity in time for the provincial election, which has to take place before the fall. "They're probably going to home in on Great Whale and pressure the Crees," Blacksmith said.

- by Alex Roslin

NO JUSTICE IN CRIME WAVE

The Quebec justice system has failed Povungnituk, say residents of this Inuit community 500 kilometres north of Whapmagoostui on Hudson Bay. Justice authorities have not dealt properly with a sudden crime wave that has hit Povungnitik, including an ongoing case involving 116 children who say they were sexually assaulted, residents complain.

"The last straw was the case of six sexual assault charges committed against children that were rejected by the Crown because the children were

BRIEFS CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

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afraid to testify in front of seven adults they didn't know," said a statement from Johnny Oovaut, one of two Inuit Surete du Quebec constables serving the community of 1,300. Oovaut's statement was printed in full in *La Presse* on January 10. Only one of the perpetrators in the sexual assaults got any jail-time - 12 months, Oovaut said.

"This individual merits a much more severe sentence for his crimes. He did things to the children that animals would not do to their offspring. During the trial, he didn't show any remorse and was even supported by his wife," he said.

A flying judge visits Povungnituk for only a few hours every three months, dispensing justice in a hurried and insensitive fashion, residents say. Criminals receive little rehabilitation and after their sentences often return to the community unchanged, and sometimes even more bitter.

"Quebec is trying to administer justice by remote control from a great distance, by people who have no understanding of our language and culture," said Zebedee Nungak, who headed a task force dealing with the police and courts in northern Quebec.

Three hundred residents met last week to discuss the problems. They decided to send four young Inuits, who were suspected of vandalizing homes of white teachers away during the holidays, out hunting and fishing with elders to help them develop pride in themselves and their heritage.

- by Nation staff

ALGONQUIN CULTURE THREATENED

Clearcutting in La Verendrye Park is slowly destroying Algonquin culture, says a traditional Algonquin from Rapid Lake. Jacob Wawatie described the dire situation facing his community at the Native Forest Network Conference in Burlington, Vt., in November.

The problems started 15 years ago, he said, when the status of La Verendrye was changed from park to nature reserve. This allowed the Quebec government to give forestry companies permits to cut in the area. In 1989 and 1990, Wawatie's community set up protest blockades on logging roads. But the cutting continued, leaving 50 per cent of the 80,000-sq-km territory clear-cut.

The standoffs prompted the Quebec and Canadian governments to sign a trilateral agreement with the local band council allowing the continued cutting of the forests, but with supervision from the Algonquins. But the Quebec government violated even this agreement, and the Algonquins responded by erecting more blockades last winter. The tensions are still not resolved, and to make matters worse, an injunction now exists forbidding any new blockades to stop the clearcutting.

Wawatie lives traditionally off the land with his family, including his 78-year-old grandmother. At the conference, he showed slides of his family trapping, treating animal hides, making snowshoes and clothing, and fishing from canoes. He also showed how the delicate forest floor has been destroyed by clearcutting, and said that animals and birds are disappearing from the area. What's more, a logging road is

BRIEFS CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

MEXICAN NATIVE REVOLT

At the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation took over six towns in the southern Mexico state of Chiapas, launching an uprising that has highlighted the country's mistreatment of aboriginal people.

The group, which goes by the Spanish acronym EZLN, consists of peasants descended from the ancient Mayans and demands an end to "an undeclared genocidal war against our people."

The Mexican army mobilized 12,000 soldiers, helicopter gunships and tanks to quash the uprising. The death toll is not easy to confirm, but human-rights groups say some 400 people have died, including many aboriginal non-combatants killed in air raids.

Ovide Mercredi, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, flew to Mexico as part of a Canadian delegation to look into human-rights violations in Mexico. Mercredi blamed the violence on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and on a recent Mexican constitutional amendment that allows the sale of indigenous lands to private interests without the consent of the inhabitants. "It explains, in part, one of the root causes of the violence that erupted in that part of the country that would be the equivalent to the Canadian government saying that the Indian reservations can be sold without the consent of the Indian people."

After two weeks of fighting, Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari ordered a ceasefire and promised amnesty to rebels who stopped fighting.

The EZLN timed its uprising to coincide with the January 1 implementation date of NAFTA signed by Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. The group says NAFTA will harm Chiapas' already-poor economy.

NATION PHOTO: NEIL DIAMOND

The rebels named themselves after a famous Mexican freedom fighter, Emiliano Zapata, murdered by the government in the early part of the century. The EZLN promises to raise the indigenous Mayans out of poverty by overthrowing the government. They also call for a return of land to the mostly Mayan peasants of Chiapas. They complain that the Mexican government has backed away from land reform efforts that would have given the Mayans more land. Virtually all the farmland is now in the hands of a small group of powerful ranchers. *(See Zapatista Declaration on page 21)*

BY ERNEST WEBB

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

being planned through his grandmother's traditional territory.

Wawatie said that without their traditional way of life, the Algonquin culture will die, and that the presence of government schools and housing is accelerating the process by preparing the Algonquins for an existence without their lands.

- by Carla Nemiroff

MICMAC REVEALS TRUTH ABOUT NOVA SCOTIA HEROES

Some of Nova Scotia's top tourist spots and towns are named after British military leaders who planned savage atrocities against the Micmac people, says a new book by Micmac author and political leader Dan Paul. "Their names are an affront to our people and the names of those places should be changed," Paul said in one news report.

Among the military leaders are:

General Jeffrey Amherst, who in 1763 sent smallpox-infected blankets to the Micmacs, and later complained that he couldn't bring over English hunting dogs to track down First Nations people. Today, the first town many tourists encounter after crossing the province's northern border is named after Amherst.

Lord Cornwallis, the founder of Halifax, paid bounty hunters for the scalp of every Micmac person murdered. Today several schools, a town and a Canadian Forces Base in the Annapolis Valley carry his name.

Colonel Charles Lawrence issued a proclamation in 1756 offering 30 pounds for every Micmac man brought to a British fort alive, and 25 pounds for a Micmac scalp. Lawrencetown, in the Annapolis Valley, is named after him.

Paul's book, *We Were Not the Savages*, says traditional Canadian history texts put these men on a pedestal, even though they killed nearly 100,000 Micmacs between the 1600s and the mid-1800s through disease and starvation campaigns, not to mention outright murder. "You don't demand of a people its extermination and then expect them to jump and say, 'Glory Hallelujah, we're with you.'"

Paul, the executive director of the Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs, worked in Ottawa for Indian Affairs for 15 years. He called on Prime Minister Jean Chretien to issue an apology to the Micmacs and said the government should move on a Micmac land claim to nearly one million hectares of land. Today, the 10,000 Nova Scotia Micmacs have only 11,300 hectares of land.

- by Nation staff

HAWAIIANS SEEK SOVEREIGNTY

One hundred years after Hawaii was forcibly incorporated into the United States, the aboriginal people of Hawaii are fighting back. A coalition of indigenous organizations has formed to press for Hawaiian sovereignty and is demanding redress for the U.S. genocide that eliminated 85 per cent of the indigenous population. In the 1700s, the Hawaiian aboriginal population was 1 million. Now it stands at only 150,000.

Hawaii was incorporated into America after a U.S.-backed military coup led by whites that overthrew the reigning indigenous government in 1893. The island archipelago was formally annexed by the Americans in 1898 and was made the 50th state in 1959.

"Our dreams and hopes of a sovereign Hawaiian nation are morally just and not unreasonable," said one Hawaiian aboriginal activist in an information bulletin about sovereignty. "From the catastrophic decline in population because of imported disease, to the prohibition of speaking our native language and worshiping our gods because of imported prejudice and ignorance, to the overthrow of our monarchy and the theft of our lands because of imported greed and power-mongering, our island people have been systematically, powerfully and almost totally stripped of their ability to make sound, responsible decisions for themselves."

- by Alex Roslin

WOLF WARNING IN WASWANIPI

Since early last month, several wolves have been sighted in the vicinity of Miquelon, Desmairsville and Waswanipi, Quebec. Two pet dogs were killed and eaten by wolves in Miquelon during the first week of December.

The Waswanipi Cree First Nation, police force and public safety committee organized a wolf hunt to ensure the safety of the members of the community. To date, two wolves have been killed, one within the boundaries of the Waswanipi community.

Wolves have also been seen on the streets of Waswanipi and have left tracks leading to open porches of local residents' homes. A public notice has been issued warning people not to walk around at night and to keep their pets safely indoors.

The wolves' brave behaviour seems to result from the combination of extreme cold and hunger, and possibly the easy prey of domestic pets.

- by Sidney Snowboy Orr

CSB PLANS PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

The Cree School Board's public speaking contest started in Waskaganish in 1989, and has since been hosted in Waswanipi, Nemaska and Wemindji. The event is sponsored by a host school with support from student services.

This year's contest will be hosted by James Bay Eeyou School in Chisasibi, the largest school in the Cree School Board with a student population of nearly 1,000. The contest is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 27.

The following is the list of topics from which students may choose to talk about:

1. What I like most about my community.
2. What hunting and trapping mean to me.
3. Why I plan to finish high school and go to college.
4. The importance of Cree Language, Elders or Traditions in my life.
5. The qualities of the person I most admire.
6. What I have learned through participation in extra-curricular activities.
7. Teenage suicide prevention.

Students may choose to speak in English, French or Cree. Winners will be chosen from each of the three categories and prizes will be awarded to the winners. One grand prize will be awarded to the school team with the highest point total.

Female participants are asked to wear dresses and male participants should wear a shirt and tie. Jeans and running shoes are not permitted. Speeches must be a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 15 minutes. There should be little or no reading from prepared notes, although prompt cards are acceptable. Speeches are presumed to be the original work of the participants.

Participants are generally chosen by a local competition held by each school. One student is chosen from each language category to represent the school at the regional event. Local competitions should respect the rules of the regional competition in order to prepare the students.

The contest is open to all secondary students registered in the Cree School Board. For more information, see your teacher or student services.

NATON PHOTO: NEIL DIAMOND

EDUCATION: EXPANDING OUR KNOWLEDGE

In the old days, education was a fact of life. You lived your education through your own actions and interpretations of your parents' and their parents' actions, and their interpretations of their parents' actions, and so forth. This developed into traditions passed on from generation to generation, which provided a basis for an order of life and cultural stability.

Throughout the modern world, traditions and cultural lifestyles have been compromised by the "regular and average lifestyle" brought on by "progress" which provided "better living conditions" for "everyone." If the world were perfectly round and every living environment the same, this perfect harmony could be possible. But this just isn't so in this vastly different and changing world-wide climate. The Cree Nation is no exception.

Today, an industrialized and politically homogenized lifestyle is the norm. The average Cree child learns exactly the same things as other children in Quebec. The standards of education reflect the average use of average skills within an average lifestyle in the average Quebec community.

But how average can one be? Are the average ABC's of Quebec education appropriate for the average lifestyle of the Crees of northern Quebec? Can the average lifestyle of the average Cree in northern Quebec change to accommodate the expectations of the Quebec education system?

No. It's a simple answer to a complex question, but a daunting challenge to those parents who are responsible for their own children's future. Politically, those parents are responsible for the course that their education system takes, for their children from childhood to graduation; from graduation to adulthood; and from adulthood to caring for their own children's educational needs. It is a cycle which should change according to the needs of the environment which encircles them.

The Cree lifestyle must recuperate from this massive educational indirection. The traditional parameters of learning must incorporate the knowledge necessary to continue the cycle of the Cree lifestyle - without being "left out" from the rest of the world. This can be a very overwhelming process for teachers, but children have proven to be most flexible and to absorb everything that sparks their interest.

How can this process be "acceptable" to parent, teacher and the official education system? As one can readily understand, the political process can't answer the needs of those whose needs are non-political.

Parental guidance must venture beyond the home and into the everyday environment. Teachers must realize that the traditional parameters of educational standards must be broken to accommodate changes in lifestyle. Educational parameters must never be limited to politically inclined knowledge and must always be expanded to accommodate the increasing information of today's and yesterday's world.

What is education anyway?

The answer is - expansion of one's knowledge.

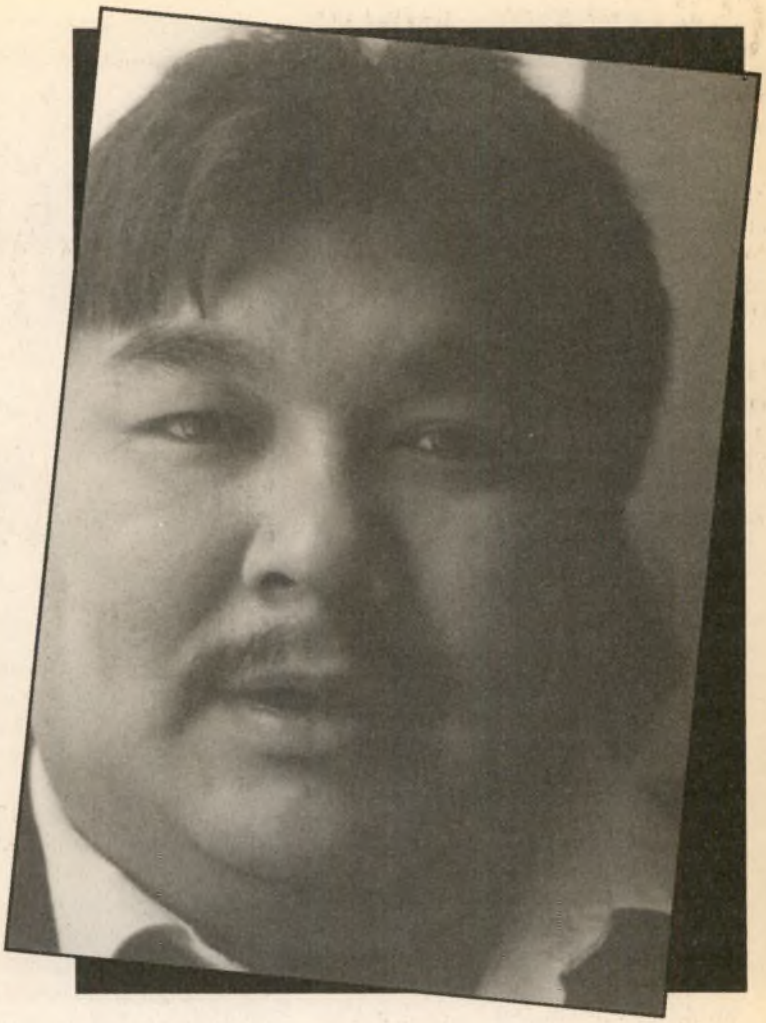
BY SIDNEY SNOWBOY ORR

THE LAND IS OUR DICTIONARY

When everyone else was heading off to residential school, Paul Gull's father had something different in mind for his children. He told Indian Affairs, "I want to take care of my own children." Gull, who has been chair of the Cree School Board since 1992, learned from his father that education begins at home.

"That's one of the things I value most," Gull told *the Nation*'s Ernest Webb in an interview about the state of the Cree education system. "And that's what I'd like to tell people. That's the way education has to be: It has to begin at home. Parents have to be more involved in the education process."

BY ERNEST WEBB



NATION PHOTO: ERNEST WEBB

The Nation: How was your father able to avoid sending you to a residential school? Wasn't it law?

Paul Gull: I don't know how. Indian Affairs paid for the tuition where we went to school. I guess he told them he didn't want us to leave our home community of Matagami. We always went to school in Matagami. The taxi used to come pick us up every morning. Eventually, when more people moved there because of the projects, the bus came.

So you consider yourself lucky?

I do because I've seen the hardships he went through in order to get us through that process. A lot of people know about the Matagami area. We went through a lot of hard times in order to get our education. My father worked on the project in James Bay. My mother took care of us. One thing I can be proud of is one year, none of us missed school. In one whole year, we had zero absenteeism for the whole family. There were eight of us going to school. I guess there were times when we didn't have enough to eat. Still, we were always at school. I can thank my mother for that.

What about students today? Do you think they realize how lucky they are to...

The reasoning behind the schools being in the community is that people can take care of their own children. I guess this came with the James Bay Agreement. People started talking about controlling the education system. We have to take control of what's happening in our own communities. The students have to realize it's important that they go to school on a day-to-day basis. People know if you miss a day, you have to catch up on the following day. Sometimes the teachers don't have time to spend on a certain individual who's always missing school because they have a program to follow.

The Cree School Board report which you presented at the Annual General Assembly identified your major concerns about education. What are your findings so far?

The major concerns came from the people themselves, from community tours. Some of the findings were that there was a high dropout rate, high absenteeism, low interest from the students and a superficial view of Cree culture in the programs. In the past, there was a lot of talk about how the Cree programs should work. I don't want to blame anybody for what's happened. I guess it's part of the growing process, growing pains.

These are opinions which were given on the community level and what we are trying to do in identifying those four major concerns is to get people to start thinking about how solutions can be found. When we go back, we expect to hear those solutions. Something that happened in the past is we had a tendency to go into the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

THE LAND

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

community and tell the people what to do. And they tend to fall back and say that's not my solution; why should I work on it. People have to realize they have to come up with the solutions themselves. When you take the solutions to heart, so to speak, that's when you can actually follow through on them. We'll help them as best as we can at the Cree School Board.

What do you tell a student who wants to drop out or has already dropped out?

The CSB is working on a mechanism. Right now, there is adult upgrading in every community. From last year, the clientele for adult ed doubled. Last year, there were approximately 300 people enrolled. Now, we have about 600. The major need right now is people want to go back and get their diploma.

For the students who are thinking of dropping out or have already dropped out, I can't tell them to go back. If you do drop out, at least be a useful member of the community so you can help other people and not be a nuisance to the community. Try and be a useful member of the community. That's the encouragement I can give them. Gradually, they'll realize they need education.

NATION PHOTO: NEIL DIAMOND

When you talk about the levels of literacy in the classrooms, what about the students who can't follow what's going on? What alternatives are there for them?

Presently, the alternative for them is the program Individual Pathways To Education, which gives you the basics in math, English and French. Those major courses have to be covered. Then, they give you an opportunity to work in the community. It's a job-oriented concept to education. We've been looking for typical vocational sectors for these people who don't want to go into the mainstream of education. They have an opportunity to go into mechanics, electricity, carpentry or what have you. What we're trying to do is harmonize adult ed and the youth center so we don't have to pay twice for the same course.

What does the absenteeism rate tell us?

Thirty per cent of the students miss a majority of their classes. Once a student misses over 20 per cent, he is, according to statistics, due to fail that course. The absenteeism rate is too high. For example, some people have missed more than 30 days in a year; in some cases, it's 40 days. That's two months a year. If you add it up from grade one to secondary V, that's four years lost in total.

It's the first time we've compiled statistics on absenteeism. This year, for example, during the hockey tournament in one school, half the school was missing Thursday to Tuesday. They all went to Val d'Or. We tried to work with the recreation directors to try finding within the school calendar an appropriate time for the tournament. I guess tradition has it that it has to be during the first or second week of December. We don't have any holidays during that time at the school board. It's exam preparation time so it has an effect on the students.

How about the Cree culture and language programs. The report says they aren't satisfactory. How can you give quality Cree culture and language programs when the classes are two or three times a week 45 minutes at a time?

Right now, we're teaching kindergarten and grade one in Cree. A person has to master his own tongue before being able to learn another language. We're thinking about doing it all the way to grade three because, if you think about it, when you start picking up a new language you're seven or eight years old. The basis of thought in language has to come from the mother tongue.

... IS OUR DICTIONARY

When I think back to when I was in grade 1, when I was reading, I thought in Cree. I was translating what I was reading in my head into Cree. Then I understood the story. I think that's going very well. I hope it's going well in all the schools because of the need to strengthen our own language.

When will those results come in?

The results are in now. Grade one is the pilot project we did this year in Chisasibi and Waskaganish. For Cree culture, the results will be in this coming year. In Waswanipi, for example, they changed the schedule to give more time to the Cree culture teacher in the bush doing activities that need to be done around the camp. They went there every morning and came back at 4:30.

I always thought the land was the Cree dictionary. I can speak Cree when I'm in the community. But when I go out on the land, I always learn five different new words every time I go out there. That's why I feel Cree culture should be taught on the land.

The report mentioned that the school board needs a lot of help from the parents, the elders, the band councils and other community organizations. How would you like to see them offering a hand?

In some communities, the council declares through resolutions that education is a priority, and whenever there are educational activities, they get involved. In some cases, with funding or with fairs or public speaking contests. We want everyone to work toward the common goal of having more graduates in our schools.

One thing that comes up when I'm in the community is the comparison that someone has better standards than ours. I've always stated that wherever I went to school, they said that. When I was in Matagami, they said Val d'Or was better. When I was in Val d'Or, they told me Hull was better. It all depends on what happens in the family. That's the ultimate reason why a child finishes school. As Matthew Coon-Come told me once: If a child is going to finish school 75 per cent of it depends on the parent. If we can work with that idea, I'm sure the quality of education will improve for everybody.

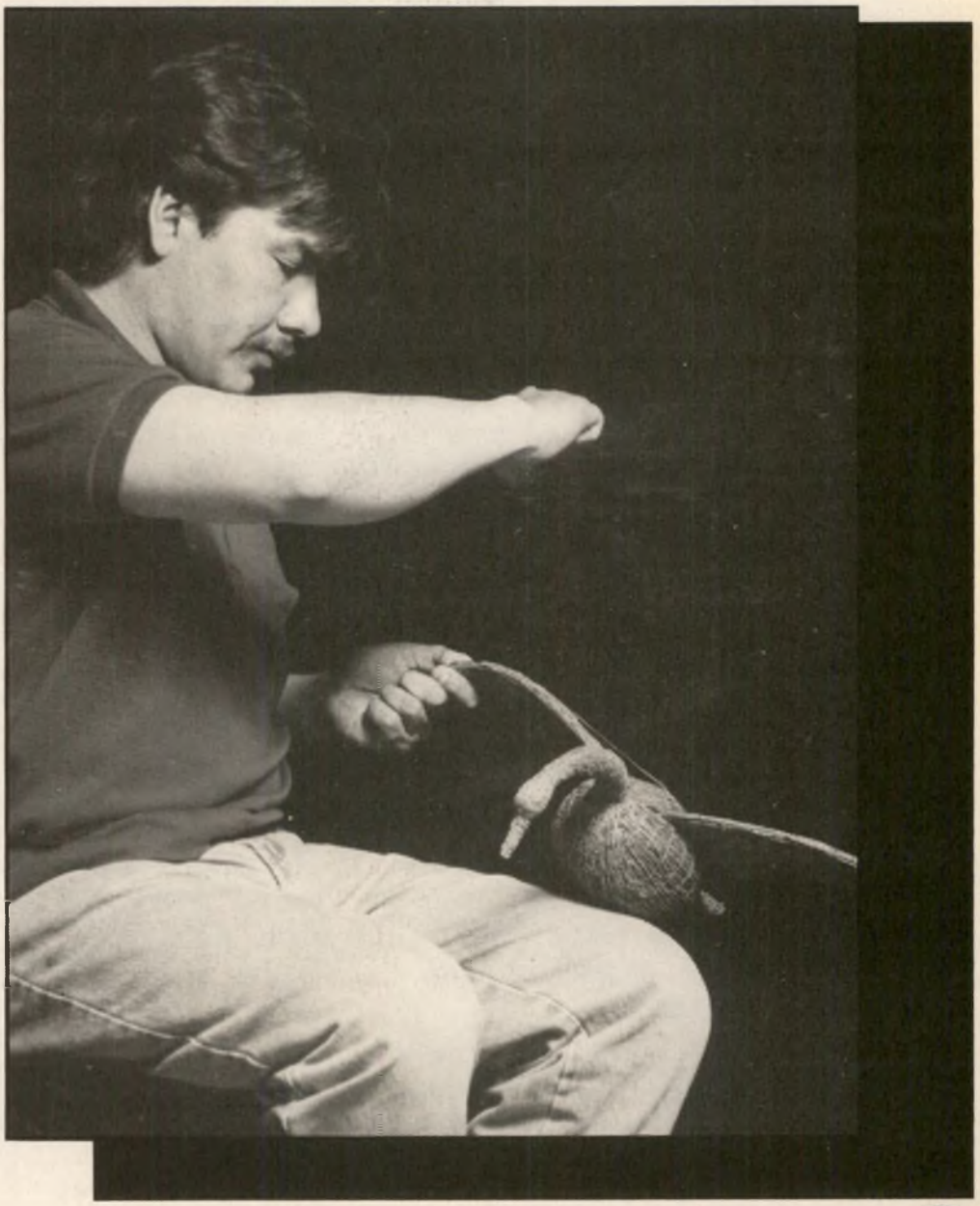
What is your vision of education in the future?

I'd like to see the people empower themselves, believing that our schools and the way we do things will help for the future. If you start believing that other things are better than yours, then naturally it's not going to work. If you believe we can do it ourselves as a people and that education can come from Cree culture and working with the non-native system, adapting it to our needs, I'm sure it can work and that the quality of education can improve.

> "I ALWAYS THOUGHT THE LAND WAS THE CREE DICTIONARY. WHEN I GO OUT ON THE LAND, I ALWAYS LEARN FIVE DIFFERENT NEW WORDS EVERY TIME I GO OUT THERE"

Any final comments?

I'd like to wish everybody a Happy New Year. I hope we all work together for the common cause - the future of our children. Agooda.



NATION PHOTO: NEIL DIAMOND

LOVE & LIFE IN THE SUMMER OF '90

Sundogs isn't your typical coming-of-age story from Hollywood - white boy with nice car gets into trouble, gets drunk, gets girl, makes peace with dad, becomes a man.

Marianne, the heroine of *Sundogs*, Lee Maracle's first novel, doesn't have time to worry about fast cars. She's preoccupied with other problems. Marianne's brother, Rudy, beats up his wife. Her mother yells at the TV and harbours a hatred of white society that embarasses Marianne. Her sister, Rita, is getting a divorce. An arrogant white boy keeps showing up uninvited at her house, scaring off the man who does interest her.

Worst of all, Marianne, the youngest daughter in a middle-class First Nations family living in East Vancouver, doesn't know how to love. She is constantly holding back from fully trusting or giving herself to those who are close to her. At the root of her confusion is a feeling of being disconnected from her past, from the language of her people, from her family and, ultimately, from herself.

Sundogs is the story of Marianne and other First Nations young people who came of age during the summer of 1990. The Mohawk barricades went up half a continent away from Marianne's Vancouver, but they knock down a psychological blockade in Marianne's 20-year-old mind.

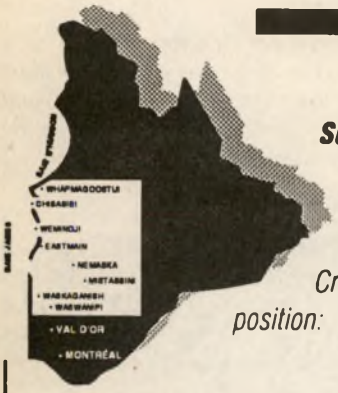
That summer sets Marianne on a path to discover herself as a First Nations woman. She learns about love. She learns about her past and decides she wants to speak the language of her mother. She also learns that she deserves respect and starts to understand her other sister, Lacey, who is an ardent feminist. "It isn't her feminism that scares me; it's the absence of my own," Marianne says. "She expects love; she expects to be treated the way women deserve to be treated." Marianne starts to expect the same thing.

But it's not easy going, she finds. "Erase yourself or consent to shame. That's the sociology of being Native and a woman in Canada. It is the result of besiegement, encroachment, small neglect, impoverishment and mass death. I had my mind and spirit crippled by the choices they left open to me as though there were no others."

In *Sundogs*, Lee Maracle shows how the world of politics and how the politics of an entire people impacts on personal lives in the most profound way. The book shows how the genocide against the First Nations destroyed Marianne's ability to trust and love. To put herself and her family back together, she has to embark on an intensely personal journey. But her inspiration is the brave stands of Elijah Harper and the Mohawks thousands of miles away, people she has never met but whose destinies are inseparable from her own. "If Elijah upset Canada, he upset me a great deal more," Marianne says. "His message to us was profoundly simple; we are worth fighting for, we are worth caring for, we are worthy."

Sundogs is a moving and inspirational story - a testament to why Seneca writer Lee Maracle is one of Canada's most respected First Nations writers. *Sundogs* was published by Theytus Books, a First Nations publisher (P.O. Box 20040, Penticton, B.C., V2A 8K3). You can order a copy by writing to them.

by Alex Roslin



The ***Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay****, responsible for administering a 32-bed regional hospital centre, a social services centre, two group homes, two reception centres and nine clinics providing primary care to the Cree population of James Bay, seeks to fill the following position:*

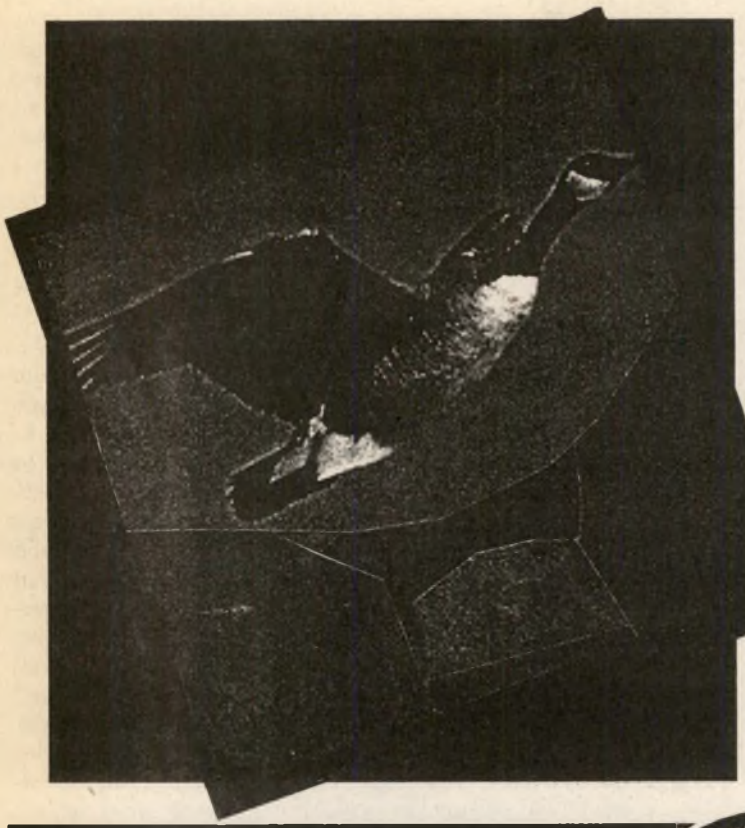
Director of Youth Protection

Based in Chisasibi, you will be required to travel frequently as you oversee the application of the Youth Protection Act, the Adoption Act, the Youth Offenders Act, and the Health and Social Services Law, and assume responsibility for managing foster placement and the operation of the group homes. In addition, the management functions you will carry out for nine communities will include policy planning, development and implementation, client case supervision and evaluation, and communication. Since we are in the process of organizational change, you, as a member of Senior Management, will also participate in setting the organizational philosophy and objectives.

An exemplary team leader, you must possess a university degree in Social Work or equivalent knowledge and experience coupled with proficiency with the judicial system and the social services law. Your ability to create and apply culturally appropriate social work approaches in the James Bay environment must be supported by a background in administration and effective communication skills in English and French. Fluency in Cree is an asset.

Your annual benefits will include a salary between $48,996 and $63,696, an isolation premium of $5,955 if single, or $9,526 with dependents, four weeks' vacation, another two for professional development, and three or four paid outings depending on your status. We will also assume your moving and storage expenses, and provide you with lodging.

Please send your resumé by January 21, 1994, to **Lise Brodeur, Personnel Management Consultant, Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, Chisasibi, Quebec JOM 1EO.**



GETTING MY NEMAWON

One spring I'm standing in a typical variety store in a pre-fab town called Radisson, which sprung up in the middle of a Chi-you's (Elder's) hunting ground during the building boom of James Bay Phase I. Since the project, that store is one of the few places where you can get alcohol in the Chisasibi area.

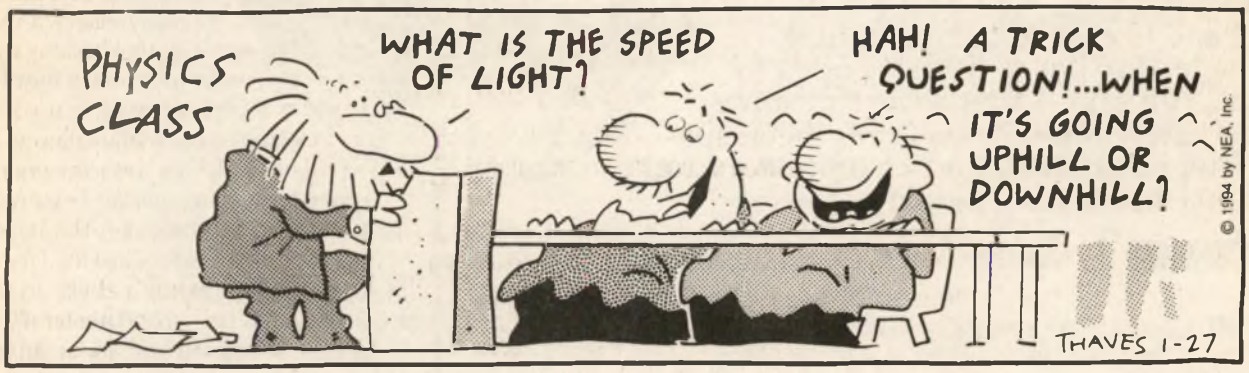
It was goose season; we were in town for one reason or another. I stood in the middle of one of the aisles looking for my Nemawon (hunting lunch), scanning the cookies, peanuts, what have you. I grabbed a couple of things.

Suddenly I felt someone watching me. I looked to the side and standing there was the Chi-you. In the middle of a "modern-day" variety store. Standing there where once as a young man he snowshoed to go check the snares which fed his family, through the aisle where they now have Gummi worms and jelly beans.

He gave me a big smile, shook hands and asked me what I was doing. "Getting my Nemawon," I replied. Then we went off on our way. I got a few more items. I checked out the drinks, picked up some cola, then went to the till to pay. On my way out I felt someone tugging my arm. I turned around and it was him; he'd been watching me all along. He gave me the biggest smile. With his eyes he wished me a good journey. I walked out with a good feeling in my heart.

BY ERNEST WEBB

FRANK & ERNEST® by Bob Thaves



GARFIELD® by Jim Davis

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JIM DAVIS 1-25
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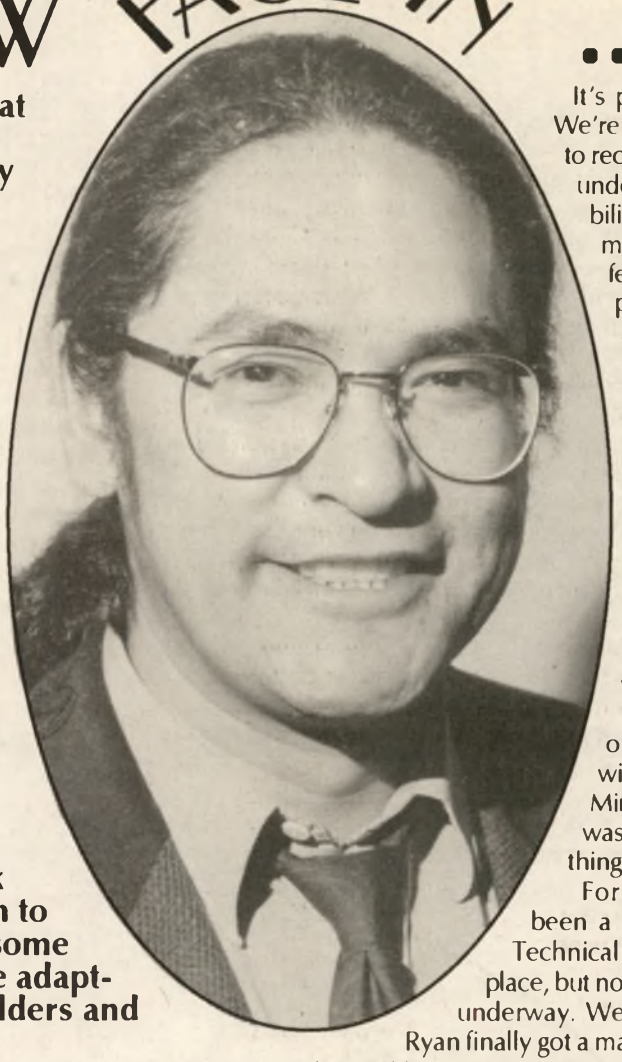
SOME PEOPLE HAVE SOMETHING EXCITING AND NEW HAPPEN TO THEM EVERY SINGLE DAY!
SOUNDS MONOTONOUS

A NEW FACE IN ...

Kenny Blacksmith is the new face at the Grand Council of the Crees. Just three months into his term as Deputy Grand Chief, he is already deep in discussion with the Quebec government about long-festering problems with policing in Cree communities.

Cree police constables complained of a lack of support from the province and were so frustrated they threatened to quit their jobs. The talks with Quebec were going smoothly until Premier Daniel Johnson shuffled the cabinet and appointed a new Public Security Minister. Now, Blacksmith must forge links with the new minister and is hoping that Quebec still has the will to resolve the problems.

Blacksmith, who is also vice-chair of the Cree Regional Authority, spoke with the Nation's William Nicholls about a variety of issues, including policing, the Great Whale project and Cree leadership. "I think Cree leadership has to be more open to changes," he says. "After all, aren't some of our greatest strengths as Crees the adaptability and co-operation which our elders and traditional values have taught us?



BY WILL NICHOLLS

The Nation: I understand you are involved in negotiations on policing of the Cree communities and the problems with it. Could you explain these problems?

Kenny Blacksmith: When I started in this job earlier in the year, I reviewed a number of files to see what my predecessor, Romeo Saganash, had achieved and pursued. Policing was one of the urgent ones. At the time I started, there was talk among police constables that they would walk out or quit their jobs because they got so little support from the province. The provincial police were not too supportive. The basic problem is that the province had imposed control on policing services rather than allowing the Crees to take control.

I know that in Mistissini, for example, there was a high turnover in personnel due to ceilings on police wages. Police also can't carry guns even though they are as well-trained as the provincial police. Are these problems common to all the communities?

It's pretty much the same. We're trying to get the province to recognize them so they can undertake their full responsibilities. That was one of the main problems. The police felt they weren't well supported. Salary scales were a problem as well as jurisdiction over territory. Things changed a little after discussions began and there is movement from Quebec and Canada to address these historical problems.

Do you feel they will be resolved this year?

At the time when I opened up negotiations with then-Public Security Minister Claude Ryan, there was a lot of optimism that things would pick up.

For two years, there had been a working group set up. Technical discussions had taken place, but no negotiations had gotten underway. We felt that when Claude Ryan finally got a mandate from his cabinet, we were seeing positive movement toward achieving a resolution to the problems.

Things have somewhat changed today. Claude Ryan is gone and we have to pick up on again on the political will and be able to maintain the momentum of the negotiations. We will have to start over again and establish contact with the new minister to ensure that we will continue with the spirit of achieving an agreement-in-principle by March. We have a couple of months to finish the negotiations.

I guess you know we had some difficulties before Christmas from our side.

You're referring to the fact that the composition of the negotiating team came under question?

It came under question as a result of communication problems in regards to the transfer of files from my predecessor. But you can expect certain difficulties with any change in an organization. Time is needed for adjustment to personalities and to the way people work.

These are all things that have to be worked out with the hope that progress is the final result.

...THE CROWD

I've heard some matters have been resolved now.

Yes. The council board discussed it at length and in great detail - with great emotion, you might say. Nevertheless, I think we've achieved an understanding. Also, we maintained the same composition as before, but we added a couple of chiefs. Chief Henry Mianscum and Chief Billy Diamond were appointed and I am co-ordinating the political end of the discussions. We have resumed our negotiations with our new additions to the team.

One of your initial successes with the policing file was the Ouje-Bougomou Band.

A lot of work went into that. But I think Quebec was stalling in aspects of the policing issue with all natives, including the Crees. The Quebec government was discussing some kind of working relationship with the federal government on providing services to the Crees. There were some problems with the Ouje-Bougomou because Quebec didn't want to recognize them officially.

But didn't they set aside land for their community?

There are still matters to be worked out between Mistissini and Ouje-Bougomou. Nevertheless, they are still entitled to police services. Claude Ryan made a big effort before Christmas. He instructed his people to achieve an agreement on interim policing for the community of Ouje-Bougomou as quickly as possible. We saw this as a test case to determine how serious Quebec and Canada were in police negotiations.

Whatever happened to the Amerindian police we used to see?

I'm not sure. Under our policing negotiations, we basically hoped to get two types of policing services. One is the local police, which we now have. And in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, there is a mention of a regional police force. This has never been properly followed through.

Quebec is very skeptical about this so-called regional police force. Certainly, they didn't want to create another situation as there was with the Amerindian police force. This was a poor example on their part as the Amerindian police came under federal jurisdiction. So there is a lot of work left in setting up the proper police force in our communities, especially when you start talking about the entire region. We need to have control and ensure there's protection and security for our communities. As always, our people understand our people best. The type of police force we need is one composed of our own people with jurisdiction over the entire Cree territory.

Would such a regional police force have jurisdiction over non-Cree areas such as Radisson, which is located in Cree territory?

It would probably have to work in co-relation with existing police services. In Ouje-Bougomou, for example, we had an understanding with Quebec and the federal government that there would be a concerted effort toward exchanging support services between the provincial, Chibougamau, Chapais and Ouje-Bougomou police forces. It's a little more than policing just the community itself; the eventual goal is going into Category II lands, and perhaps even Category III lands. The important thing now is resolving the jurisdiction issue.

What other issues are you dealing with this year?

There's quite a long list. One thing I did was meet with the Minister of Income Security, Andre Bourbeau, to resolve some problems in that area. We talked about the need to review and update the existing Income Security Program to meet the current needs of the people. During the holidays, we received a letter from the minister saying he is open to a review of the program. We need to set up a task force and a committee to work on that.

Some of the files I can't go into any detail at this time - dealing with the Ministry of Fish and Game and the problem of the commercialization of wildlife. We need to sit down with the communities to discuss forestry problems.

And there's the Quebec regional development policy, which was initiated recently. We are in the final stages of implementing that program after having resolved some problems in that area. Once we have that in place, our people can access funds to assist them in starting small businesses.

I'm only in my third month and these are new responsibilities. It takes time. I'm quite new on the job. I'm also a new face in the crowd of Cree leaders. I have to take some time to review the history and understand where people are coming from.

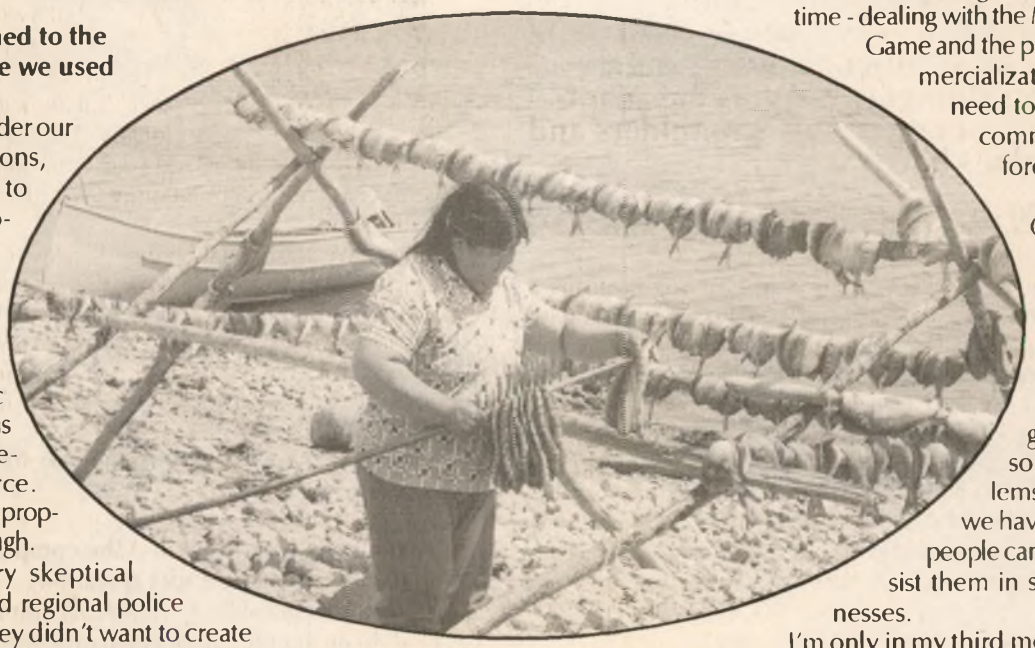


PHOTO BY: GW TUNDRA

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GRAND COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec)

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CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY

EMERGENCY PROJECTS

In August 1993, the GCCQ signed an agreement with the federal government to implement certain emergency projects to alleviate potential dangers to health.

The total amount to carry out the emergency projects is $22.2 million. The projects are presently in planning or construction stages.

The following have been approved:

CHISASIBI

Underground drainage system	3,000,000.00
Ventilation of 192 houses	735,000.00
Replacement of damaged fire hydrants	345,000.00

MISTISSINI

Replacement of old water and sewer lines	5,640,000.00

WASKAGANISH

New water intake system	480,000.00
Construction of a Sewage Lagoon	4,200,000.00

EASTMAIN

Drinking water filtration & treatment	1,800,000.00
Repairs to Sewage Treatment Plant	600,000.00

WEMINDJI

New drinking water intake	600,000.00

TOTAL PROJECTS 22,200,000.00

CHANGE OF HEART IN QUEBEC CITY?

Newly appointed Natural Resources Minister Christos Sirros has announced he will re-evaluate the Liberal government's policy in favour of big hydroelectric dams. (Mr. Sirros retains his indigenous-affairs portfolio as well.) This may put off the construction of some planned projects.

Although he would not alter any of the proceedings surrounding the Great Whale Environmental Assessment, he has indicated that he will have discussions with Hydro-Quebec, natives and others to review the whole energy question, especially in light of the province's stagnant energy demand.

Hydro-Quebec recently withdrew its support for projects that would provide 700 megawatts of private power from the public sector because demand predicted in the utility's development plan for this year did not materialize. Lise Bacon, ex- minister of energy, ordered Hydro-Quebec to go ahead with these private contracts prior to her retirement.

Mr. Sirros is worried that dam-building undertaken to satisfy economic lobbies would result in increased tensions with natives. Privately, Premier Daniel Johnson has stated that he is worried that Quebec's public finances would be affected by Hydro-Quebec's project-building and increased debt. Mr. Sirros has already contacted Grand Chief Matthew Coon-Come to set up a meeting to discuss various issues. Mr. Sirros stated that Quebec will require energy in the future, but that the Great Whale and Sainte-Marguerite-3 projects could be delayed for a few more years.

The Grand Council is eager to determine whether the mood has shifted toward the positive in Quebec City. We will keep you updated on all developments.

GREAT WHALE REVIEW UPDATE

Hydro-Quebec released its 5000-page environmental-impact review of the proposed Great Whale project on Aug. 31, 1993. The public comment period is scheduled to begin when the Cree and Inuktituk translations of the 300-page summary document are printed sometime in early February.

At that time, people will have the opportunity to determine whether Hydro-Quebec has answered the questions outlined in the guidelines, and seek additional information or clarification from the utility. There is still a great deal of analysis and work to be done on the environmental review, and it is expected to last at least two more years. There will be another round of community hearings sometime next year. Contact your local environmental administrator at the band office to consult Hydro-Quebec's summary impact statement and other documents relating to the environmental review of the proposed Great Whale project.

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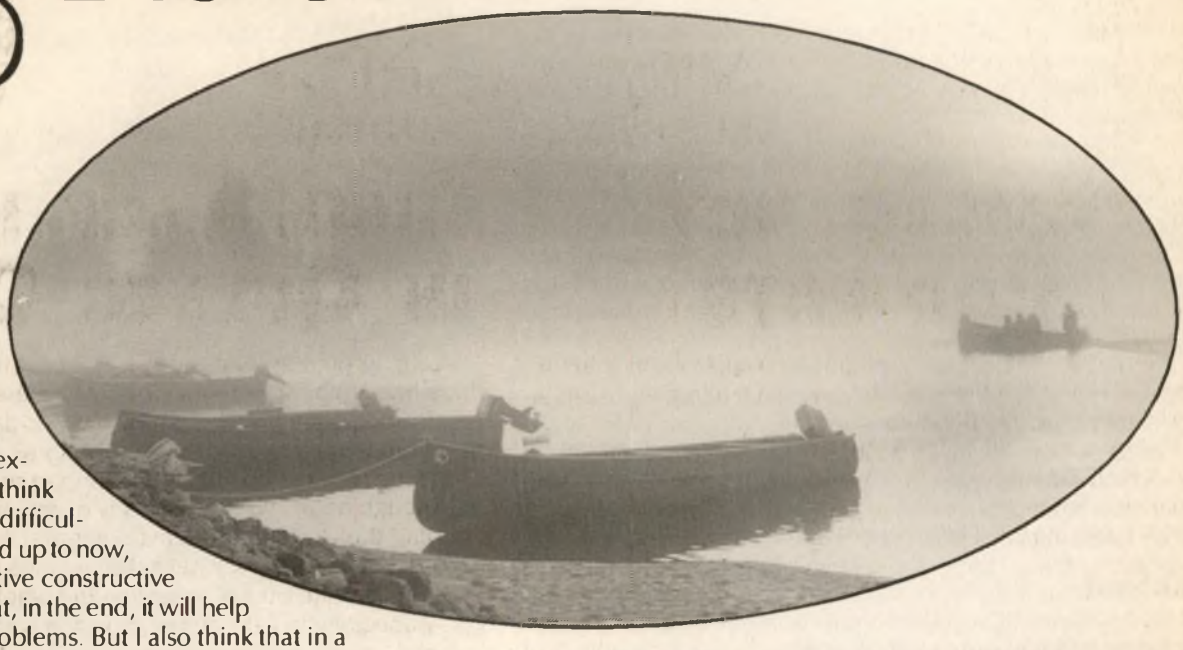


PHOTO BY: GW TUNDRA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

Do you find that, occasionally, you get tested because you're a "new face"?

I think to some extent, yes. When I think about some of the difficulties I've encountered up to now, I see them as positive constructive criticism. I think that, in the end, it will help me tackle other problems. But I also think that in a way it's disappointing. I think Cree leadership has to be more open to changes. After all, aren't some of our greatest strengths as Crees the adaptability and co-operation which our elders and traditional values have taught us?

What major challenges do you see coming up this year?

One of the main challenges is to follow up on Annual General Assembly resolutions, like the Cree Nation Gathering. We have to sit down with all the chiefs and, more importantly, with the local people to have them assess where we are going as a regional Cree government. There seem to be clashes between local government and the efforts or vision of the regional government. That's something that needs looking into. In the end, I hope we'll come out with a stronger mandate and a vision of one regional Cree government.

As well, there's a lot of talk about Great Whale. In the past, the Crees have maintained a strong position on Great Whale. That needs to be reinforced and reiterated. At the same time, I think people look at the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement as an agreement that has somewhat failed the Crees. We need to look at that as well.

People have to learn to deal with the past. If there were problems in the past, we have to admit those problems. People are still reluctant to discuss the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. Before we go into the future, as we all want to, we have to do a little house-cleaning so we can get a good look at where we are going.

As I say, I'm just learning the ropes to understand where people come from in the past. When I understand the past I guess things will be a lot clearer to me.

When do you see the Cree Gathering taking place?

Like with this year's Annual General Assembly, I think people want it in the summer when everyone is around in the villages. Perhaps it will take place before the up-coming Annual General Assembly, sometime in early summer.

What can we expect from you in the coming years?

I have a lot of interest and a sincere willingness to do all that I can to do in terms of fulfilling my mandate as Deputy Grand Chief. I'm there to support Matthew [Coon-Come] in all aspects. There's a lot that has to be learned, but at the same time there's a lot that has to be done.

I hope that a lot of support will be given to the Grand Council. At this point, I feel the Grand Council is put into a position where it isn't supported by the people. Perhaps it's not really the people, but the leadership and I hope we will be able to put aside personal differences and really start to work together to the benefit of the people. We are there for the people, whether you're a chief or councillor elected by the people from your community, or the Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chief elected by the people as a whole. We are accountable and we are totally and directly responsible to the people. I hope we can make sure the people are always put first. That's what I hope to see this year and in the future - that we learn to work together.

I hope that in pooling our resources, our strengths, setting of proper priorities we can instill in our people and in our youth more than hope for a better future. It remains our aim as Cree leaders to deal with the never-ending threats to our traditional life. One of the many challenges ahead is to ensure full implementation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement of 1975, and to implement it to meet today's needs.

Not much has changed in today's governments. Like in the past, agreements are reached but rarely implemented in the spirit intended. We can only remain optimistic for better days ahead, and hope that with all the changes in Canada and with the new Quebec government, there will be positive progress.

DAVIS INLET BOOTS OUT RCMP

The Innu of Davis Inlet threw Canadian justice and RCMP officials out of their community a month ago, and they want them to stay out.

"They have no jurisdiction over us," said Davis Inlet chief Katie Rich in a phone interview with *The Nation*. "We have never signed any agreements. We have never signed a treaty. They have imposed these laws on us."

The island community of Davis Inlet got international attention last January when several children were found high from sniffing gasoline fumes, saying they wanted to die. The community again grabbed headlines in late December when Rich and 30 other Davis Inlet residents interrupted court proceedings in the community, asking the judge to leave. Rich and other Davis Inlet women led the spontaneous protest after sitting in on the court proceedings and deciding the judge was treating Innu prisoners unfairly.

Judge Robert Hyslop, who presided over the hearings, intimidated and made fun of several witnesses and handed out unreasonable sentences, said Rich. "It was quite obvious he didn't know what was going on," she said. Neither he nor the court interpreter were from the community.

Rich decided to act after the judge gave one Innu man, a repeat offender with a history of solvency abuse, what she felt was an exorbitant sentence - three-and-a-half years for a break-and-enter charge. She said the justice system had not helped this man deal with his problems. "It's no good just to punish people. You have to heal them. And you can't just heal one person. You have to heal the whole family."

Hyslop left the court house when Rich presented him with a letter listing the community's complaints. A crowd of 150 then gathered outside a cabin where RCMP officers held 12 Innu prisoners. Rich said the police let the prisoners go to avoid further confrontation.

Rich called for a month-long cooling-off period during which no outside police would enter the community. "The tensions are still too high," she said. "People here in the community are prepared to defend themselves."

Rich also released a three-page plan to reform the justice system to show more sensitivity to Innu people. She called on Newfoundland and Ottawa to recognize Davis Inlet's four Innu peacekeepers as legitimate law enforcement officials.

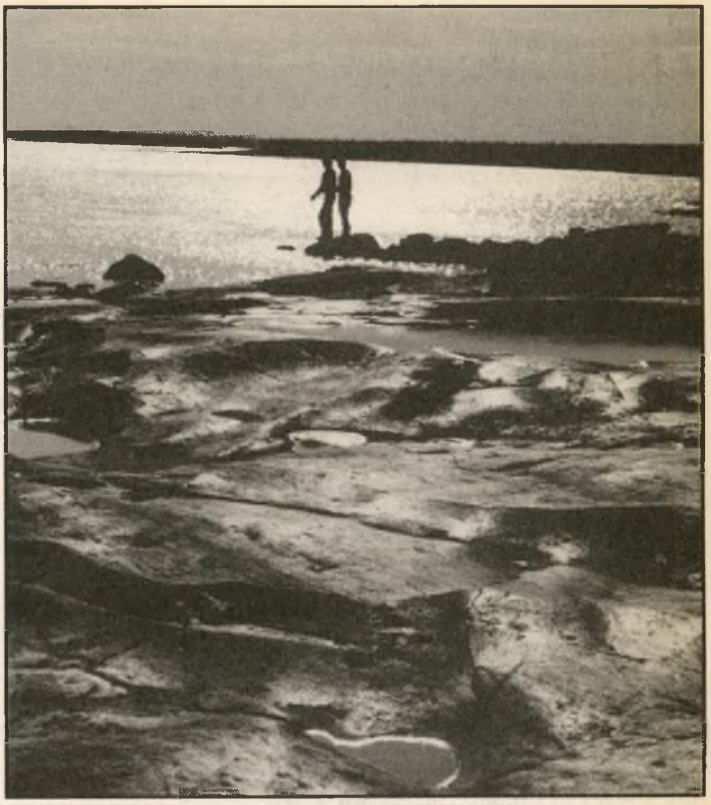
But both levels of government have refused to discuss the Innu proposals, saying the RCMP and Judge Hyslop must be allowed back into Davis Inlet and all 12 Innu prisoners must be returned to police custody. Newfoundland Justice Minister Ed Roberts threatened to send 60 RCMP officers back into the community in a military helicopter. The minister also said he may charge the leaders of the protest.

Innu peacekeepers finally handed the 12 prisoners over on January 2, but negotiations on the justice system have yet to commence. "Every proposal we put on the table, they refuse to discuss," Rich said. Federal Indian Affairs Minister Ron Irwin also rejected an invitation to visit Davis Inlet.

The Innus were relocated to the isolated Davis Inlet location in 1967 after a hydro-electric project flooded their original village. They want to relocate again to the nearby mainland location of Sango Bay, but have met with government stalling.

At the request of the Innus, the solidarity organization Peace Brigades International has announced plans to send two people to Davis Inlet to act as observers. Donations are welcome. Cheques can be made payable to Peace Brigades International, c/o the North America Project, Steve Molnar, HC 65 Box 138, Canton, NY, 13617, USA.

BY ALEX ROSLIN



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ZAPATISTAS CALL FOR END TO MEXICAN DICTATORSHIP

The following is the full text of a declaration from the Lacandon jungle by the Zapatista Army of National Liberation:

TODAY WE SAY ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

TO THE PEOPLE OF MEXICO:

MEXICAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS:

We are a product of 500 years of struggle: first against slavery, then during the War of Independence against Spain led by insurgents, then to avoid being absorbed by North American imperialism, then to promulgate our constitution and expel the French empire from our soil, and later the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz denied us the just application of the Reform laws and the people rebelled and leaders like Villa and Zapata emerged, poor men just like us. We have been denied the most elemental preparation so they can use us as cannon fodder and pillage the wealth of our country. They don't care that we have nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a roof over our heads, no land, no work, no health care, no food nor education. Nor are we able to freely and democratically elect our political representatives, nor is there independence from foreigners, nor is there peace nor justice for ourselves and our children.

But today, we say ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. We are the inheritors of the true builders of our nation. The dispossessed, we are millions and we thereby call upon our brothers and sisters to join this struggle as the only path, so that we will not die of hunger due to the insatiable ambition of a 70 year dictatorship led by a clique of traitors that represent the most conservative and sell-out groups. They are the same ones that opposed Hidalgo and Morelos, the same ones that betrayed Vicente Guerrero, the same ones that sold half our country to the foreign invader, the same ones that imported a European prince to rule our country, the same ones that formed the "scientific" Porfirsta dictatorship, the same ones that opposed the Petroleum Expropriation, the same ones that massacred the railroad workers in 1958 and the students in 1968, the same ones the today take everything from us, absolutely everything.

To prevent the continuation of the above and as our last hope, after having tried to utilize all legal means based on our Constitution, we go to our Constitution, to apply Article 39 which says: "National Sovereignty essentially and originally resides in the people. All political power emanates from the people and its purpose is to help the people. The people have, at all times, the inalienable right to alter or modify their form of government."

Therefore, according to our constitution, we declare the following to the Mexican federal army, the pillar of the Mexican dictatorship that we suffer from, monopolized by a one-party system and led by Carlos Salinas de Gortari, the maximum and illegitimate federal executive that today holds power.

According to this Declaration of War, we ask that other powers of the nation advocate to restore the legitimacy and the stability of the nation by overthrowing the dictator.

We also ask that international organizations and the International Red Cross watch over and regulate our battles, so that our efforts are carried out while still protecting our civilian population. We declare now and always that we are subject to the Geneva Accord, forming the EZLN as our fighting arm of our liberation struggle. We have the Mexican people on our side, we have the beloved tri-colored flag highly respected by our insurgent fighters. We use black and red in our uniform as our symbol of our working people on strike. Our flag carries the following letters, "EZLN," Zapatista Army of National Liberation, and we always carry our flag into combat.

Beforehand, we refuse any effort to disgrace our just cause by accusing us of being drug traffickers, drug guerrillas, thieves, or other names that might by used by our enemies. Our struggle follows the constitution which is held high by its call for justice and equality.

Therefore, according to this declaration of war, we give our military forces, the EZLN, the following orders:

First: Advance to the capital of the country, overcoming the Mexican federal army, protecting in our advance the civilian population and permitting the people in the liberated area the right to freely and democratically elect their own administrative authorities.

Second: Respect the lives of our prisoners and turn over all wounded to the International Red Cross.

Third: Initiate summary judgements against all soldiers of the Mexican federal army and the political police that have received training or have been paid by foreigners, accused of being traitors to our country, and against all those that have repressed and treated badly the civil population and robbed or stolen from or attempted crimes against the good of the people.

Fourth: Form new troops with all those Mexicans that show their interest in joining our struggle, including those that, being enemy soldiers, turn themselves in without having fought against us, and promise to take orders from the General Command of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation.

Fifth: We ask for the unconditional surrender of the enemy's headquarters before we begin any combat to avoid any loss of lives.

Sixth: Suspend the robbery of our natural resources in the areas controlled by the EZLN.

To the People of Mexico: We, the men and women, full and free, are conscious that the war that we have declared is our last resort, but also a just one. The dictators are applying an undeclared genocidal war against our people for many years. Therefore we ask for your participation, your decision to support this plan that struggles for work, land, housing, food, health care, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace. We declare that we will not stop fighting until the basic demands of our people have been met by forming a government of our country that is free and democratic.

JOIN THE INSURGENT FORCES OF THE ZAPATISTA ARMY OF NATIONAL LIBERATION.

General Command of the EZLN

CREE YOUTH SPEAK THEIR MINDS

NATION PHOTO: NEIL DIAMOND

Youths may be the majority of the Cree population, but their views are often overlooked. Jobs, traditional values and future hydro-electric development - those are the main concerns raised by youth leader James Shecapio in an interview with the *Nation*'s William Nicholls. Shecapio is the chair and spokesperson for the Cree Nation Youth Council, representing all nine Cree communities.

He struck a defiant tone against future hydro projects planned by Hydro-Quebec, including the Eastmain-1 project. "The viewpoint of the youth is: Enough is enough. Enough destruction of ancestral Cree lands. The actions of Cree youth will demonstrate and reflect that," said Shecapio, who is also an elected band councillor in Mistissini, and is active internationally as the co-chair and president of the World Indigenous Youth Council, a new organization created three years ago. Cree youth were instrumental in forming the council.

BY WILL NICHOLLS

Was there someone who had a big influence on you when you were younger?

I was raised as a young person by the late Issac Shecapio, who was a chief for about 14 years. We talked a lot about how he maintained a traditional way of life as well as being a very visible leader in the community. Other leaders like Chief Henry Mianscum and other people in the community have been my inspiration.

This year there was a joint Cree Elders-Youth conference. Were you involved in it?

Unfortunately, I wasn't at the actual conference. I did meet with the elders who attended just before this year's Grand Council Annual General Assembly. I got feedback from the youth as well. This summer's conference was very unique. This was because of some of the specific stands that the youth and the elders took. We discussed how we have come to view our relationship with non-Crees. We also discussed our relationship with the land and our traditional way of life.

I understand at this time the Cree Youth Council is the only Cree body to have an advisory board of Elders.

Yes. Since the Cree Nation Youth Council was formally established, the elders have always played a role even in the development stages of the council itself. The elders have contributed in many ways. They have always been part of our council, sitting as advisors. They are themselves appointed by the general members at annual general assemblies. Robbie Matthew from Chisasibi and John Matches are the elders who are sitting with us today.

It seems strange that a Youth Council would have elders on its board. Do you find that there are conflicts between the youth and elders?

To the contrary, we complement each other. The elders give us a lot of background on where we come from as a people. Not only what they remember as young people, but also what they remember from before the Crees had day-to-day contact with the non-Crees. This is unique in itself and very instrumental in helping to deal with the issues.

Two summers ago, the Cree Nation Youth Council held its general assembly in Nemaska, and the main theme was attempting to regain traditional values. The elders are essential to this goal. When we reviewed our constitution, that was the main question the youth had. They didn't want to see the Youth Council assimilated or controlled by the Grand Council of the Crees and the CRA. The youth themselves say the council should be based on different principles and values.

Do you think youth leaders will work to change what you described as the non-traditional values of the Grand Council and the CRA?

At the latest Grand Council/CRA Annual General Assembly, you could see it wasn't just the youth's concern. I think the elders share our concerns. Chief Billy Diamond was also calling for a resolution to have a Cree Nation Gathering, which is a change from some of the previous assemblies. It's not just the youth who are calling for our traditional values to be respected.

The Youth Council has presented a resolution opposing all new hydroelectric development to the Grand Council Annual General Assembly. What was the resolution and response?

The resolution presented to the assem-

bly was the youth position toward development that happened in the past and the proposed development happening today. In that resolution, the Cree youth clearly stated that we oppose further development in the territory. That opposition specifically included the proposed Eastmain-1 project.

The EM-1 steering committee discussed your resolution and suggested that Crees discuss how far they are willing to go to stop these projects. How far do you think the youth are willing to go?

The youth feel that there have been a lot of failures and breaches with the agreements signed in the past with non-Crees. They are long-running statements of broken promises. We understand that the Grand Council itself has compiled a document that is thicker than the original agreement on what they consider to be breaches of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and the supplementary agreements.

There is a definite need to review this relationship and closely study it. When you're asking how far the youth are ready to go, I can say that the youth and others are concerned about our future. Our future is based upon the land, and on the use and respect of that land.

The viewpoint of the youth is: Enough is enough. Enough destruction of ancestral Cree lands. Our actions will demonstrate and reflect that. In this way, we will also demonstrate that as a non-Cree, you cannot disrespect agreements made with us and keep breaking them. We are concerned not only for ourselves, but also for the youth of tomorrow, our offspring. There is no question that it should not be just the youth that are concerned, but the leadership as well.

Kenneth Gilpin, the chief of the Eastmain Band Council, has said he would invite members of the Youth Council to Eastmain. He also wondered to what extent you had an opportunity to hear an explanation of the EM-1 court case and the position that has been taken by the Grand Council. How much do you know about that?

We understand that their meeting [the EM-1 steering committee] was held sometime in early December. At this time, I haven't received anything. I think in the statements they made, they may have insinuated that the youth don't really know what they are talking about.

NATION PHOTO: NEIL DIAMOND

There are a lot of people who may disagree with that. There a lot of youth who are concerned enough to meet and look at the status of the relationships that we have with non-Crees. One of the important reservations arises from the previous agreements we have had with them. Not just the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, but also the other agreements.

My view on this is that it is clear the agreement hasn't been respected. I also fail to see why only three communities should be involved in a process like this. This process I don't agree with, but I think there are things that people need to see and study. Not just the previous agreement but all other documents and materials of such nature. We must include the views of all the Cree communities.

Nobody should think the Cree Nation Youth Council just sat down and passed a resolution without considering past or proposed agreements. We have concerns about what happened not only in the past, but also today. The Cree Youth Council's position is that if we oppose, we clearly oppose. We don't halt our opposition. Crees oppose EM-1 and took it to the courts. Given all the money we've spent, we want to continue opposing it. That is what we are saying as the youth.

Some people are saying jobs are at stake in opposing these projects. Would these be jobs for Cree youth?

There has been a lot of concern over jobs that might be jeopardized by continued opposition. Even Cree Construction mentioned it in its annual report. For me as a Cree youth, it is evident there are a lot of breaches to the James Bay Agreement. Some of the breaches are related to economic development, like the number of jobs Hydro-Quebec guaranteed Crees. Hydro promised more than 150 jobs. To date, I don't think there are even 25. I don't think we can view this as a way for the Cree Nation to solve its 70-percent unemployment rate.

We have to deal realistically with this statistic. My view - and I know other people feel the same way - is that the governments that were party to this agreement didn't act in good faith. At the time, the trappers stopped opposing the projects for reasons of Cree employment and in the name of progress. They have been betrayed. I think that, as Crees, we have to examine whether or not we can trust the other parties in any future agreements. What is the use of giving up our land and rights if they don't keep their word, yet still take what we agreed to give up? I don't think it's logical for anybody to say that if we negotiate now, we can secure jobs for the Crees. That is why I say that hydroelectric projects aren't going to create jobs for the Crees.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

First Peoples Equity Coordinator

The position is a two-year appointment, to facilitate access of First Peoples artists and arts organizations to the Canada Council, and assist in developing policies to reflect Canada's cultural and racial diversity.

Reporting to the Secretary-General of Council, the incumbent will be responsible for facilitating and providing support for the First Peoples Committee on the Arts; planning and developing policies and programs to assist First Peoples artists and arts organizations; working closely with Council sections and First Peoples arts communities and groups to develop communications, recruitment and outreach strategies; in consultation with the Council sections, managing and developing the First Peoples component of the internship program; and performing other related duties.

The ideal candidate will have:

- ☐ extensive knowledge of the diverse First Peoples cultural communities across Canada with demonstrated sensitivity to the needs of First Peoples artists and arts organizations;
- ☐ understanding of the arts and sound artistic and administrative judgment acquired through related experience in a responsible position;
- ☐ group facilitation, presentation, problem solving and interpersonal skills;
- ☐ experience in organizing, managing and evaluating training programs.

Functional knowledge of English, French and one or more First Peoples languages is desirable.

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Coordonnateur de l'équité (Premiers peuples)

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Relevant de la secrétaire générale du Conseil, le titulaire aura la responsabilité de faciliter et de soutenir les travaux du Comité des arts des Premiers peuples; de planifier et d'élaborer des politiques et programmes d'aide aux artistes et aux organismes artistiques des Premiers peuples; de travailler, en étroite collaboration avec les services du Conseil et avec les communautés et groupes artistiques des Premiers peuples, à élaborer des stratégies de communication, de recrutement et d'extension; en consultation avec les services du Conseil, de gérer et de développer le volet Premiers peuples du programme de stages; et d'accomplir d'autres tâches connexes.

Le candidat idéal devra

- ☐ avoir une connaissance étendue des diverses communautés culturelles des Premiers peuples du Canada et se montrer sensible aux besoins des artistes et des organismes artistiques des Premiers peuples;
- ☐ avoir une bonne compréhension des arts et un bon jugement artistique et administratif à la suite d'une expérience connexe dans un poste comportant des responsabilités;
- ☐ avoir des aptitudes pour le travail de groupe, la présentation d'exposés, la solution de problèmes et les relations interpersonnelles;
- ☐ avoir de l'expérience en organisation, gestion et évaluation de programmes de formation.

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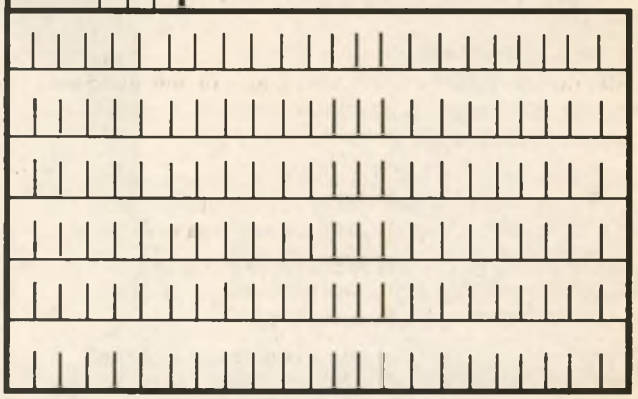

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CREE YOUTH SPEAK ...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

Do you think it's costing too much money for the Crees to fight these types of projects?

I think it's costing way too much money and that some of that money could have been better utilized to create employment for the Cree people. Perhaps they could have spent it on a study on job opportunities for the Crees present and future. I know there are millions of dollars spent annually opposing the projects. The costs just associated with the EM-1 court case for lawyers, consultants and so on are phenomenal.

I don't think we can just continue to oppose projects, taking them to court and then sitting down and coming to an agreement. Then the next one that comes around, we start all over again. This seems to be somewhat of a formula for Hydro-Quebec.

We need to re-examine how our relationship with Hydro-Quebec is progressing.

What are the Youth Council's priorities for this term in office?

There has been a lot of discussion about how specifically we can integrate our traditional way of life with its unique customs, cultural values and the principles that make up Cree society into the Youth Council. There is a lot related to that in terms of economic development, education, health, native issues and the justice system. There is a lot of commendable work that the Grand Council has done with regards to that.

There are concerns about the implementation of the various studies and we understand it takes time to do that. Considering the majority of the Cree population consists of youth, I think we had better start to seriously look at job creation differently than before. The past shows us that whatever we were doing, it's not working and so are most of the Cree youth. We should be looking at job creation that respects our traditional ways of life.

I think it is wrong that the elders haven't played a role in this. When we talk to them, we know they have ideas and aspirations not just for the Crees, but also for the people who have relations with us.

NATION PHOTO: NEIL DIAMOND

Do you see higher education playing a role in this?

In any society, human resources play an important part in our future and there are definite needs that require higher levels of education. In terms of our development as a people, I know there are over 300 students in post-secondary schools. There are also a great many high school students preparing themselves to take that avenue of higher education. They are preparing themselves for their future and ours as a community, society and a nation.

It is also not just the Cree youth who need education. There are people who are presently working in Cree entities, band councils and businesses who need to upgrade their education or job skills to perform better for the benefit of all our people.

Do you have any final comments?

Just a general comment for the Cree youth. No matter what level you are at: Challenge yourself and fufil your dreams, because within those dreams is the true vision of the Crees for today and tomorrow.

AIR CREEBEC

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